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EDITOR R.PALME DUTT

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Notes of the Month

1975—

Year of Decision

**by R
Palme
Dutt**

**R.P.D. completed these 'Notes' 4 days
before his death on December 20, 1974**

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Notes of the Month

1975—YEAR OF DECISION

‘The Soviet Union and the United States of America . . . intend to continue, without a loss in momentum, to expand the scale and intensity of their co-operative efforts in all spheres as set forth in the agreement they have signed so that the process of improving relations between the USSR and the US will continue without interruption and will become irreversible.’

Joint Declaration of Soviet-US Summit Meeting, signed by General Secretary Brezhnev and President Ford, at Vladivostok on November 24, 1974.

December 15, 1974

What is the prospect of 1975? The record of 1974 has already seen the most signal advance in the international situation since the years immediately after the joint victory over fascism. The difficult era of the cold war during the nineteen-fifties and nineteen-sixties has given place to the positive developments of the new era of detente during the last three years. This aim of detente has found expression in the successive US-Soviet agreements during these three years, culminating in the Vladivostok, US-Soviet Agreement on November 24, 1974. There are still plenty of problems and dangers to be overcome. But this advance of detente during the last three years has corresponded to the vital interests of all the peoples in every country in the world. The joint efforts of all the peoples can ensure that in the crucial decisions which will have to be made in 1975 the aims of detente to extend economic and cultural co-operation and common efforts in the cause of world peace shall be further carried forward, and prove, in the words of the US-Soviet joint declaration, ‘irreversible’.

New World Balance

This advance of detente which has been the most conspicuous feature of the international situation during the past three years has prepared the way for the decisions now due to be reached in 1975. Detente is the reflection of the new balance in the world today. The first and most decisive factor of this new balance is the accelerating advance in the relative strength and constructive role of socialism, represented by the Soviet Union in the forefront of the socialist nations, with the latest five year plan reaching completion ahead of

schedule and with the accompanying advance of the community of socialist nations, immune from the crisis of the capitalist world. It is this positive constructive role of socialism as the key historical factor in the modern era, which has been the decisive factor in making possible the new character of the whole modern era since the end of the second world war.

Towards Detente

In contrast with the previous experience, in which the second world war followed within twenty-one years of the first, twenty-seven years have now passed since the end of the second world war without the outbreak so far of a new world war (though not without destructive regional wars) which used to be widely proclaimed by many would-be experts as the supposed inevitable immediate sequel of the end of the second world war. While all the imperialist powers have engaged in major wars during this modern era since the second world war, the US in Korea, Vietnam and now also Cambodia, and Britain and France in Egypt, the Soviet Union has devoted all its efforts to promote the aims of world peace and a reduction of armaments. This consistent policy has culminated in the present new era of detente during the last three years by the co-operation of the US with the Soviet Union in developing this era as an era of detente. This is a new historical era expressing a new balance in the world today.

New Victories of Democracy and National Liberation

This advance of socialism as the key factor in the modern era has made possible and inspired the advance of the peoples all over the world. New victories of democracy and national liberation have been achieved in a wide series of countries from Portugal and Greece to Mozambique and all the vast area of the former Portuguese colonies in Africa and beyond. In Greece the downfall of the fascist military regime in 1974 brought the special decree of the new cabinet restoring the full legal rights of the immortal Greek Communist Party and lifting the ban which had been imposed since 1947. In Portugal the downfall of the oldest continuous fascist military regime, maintained for close on half a century by the rulers of Portugal, linked in their ancient alliance with the rulers of Britain, an alliance carried forward in Nato, has won the victory of freedom for the millions of Portuguese and Africans allied over decades of heroic common struggle against the common oppressor. These are now engaged in shaping their new future, and safeguarding it against rearguard actions of the representatives of the fallen fascist regime and neo-colonialism. But

the consequences of this victory of popular freedom extends far beyond the millions of Portuguese and Africans directly involved. This victory has transformed the balance of the relations and prospects in the whole African continent. It has thrown into confusion and cross-purposes and conflict all the imperialist interests centred in Africa, as they endeavour to adapt their policies and tactics to meet the new conditions. It has brought a new leap forward of the freedom movement of all the peoples of Africa. The new political situation in Rhodesia has given a vivid demonstration of this process of transformation and popular advance in Africa.

Africa in Movement

The downfall of the vast Portuguese colonial empire in Africa has sounded the warning note of the bankruptcy and impending doom of all the old racist regimes based on apartheid and the privileged position of colonialist settlers and neo-colonialism to hold down the African majority for the indefinite future and delay the recognition of equal rights irrespective of race. The experience in Rhodesia has thrown a sharp light on this new situation, which is only in its earliest stage. Rhodesia had been originally built up by British imperialism as an associated armed colony of White settlers to hold down the African majority. But when the interests of British imperialist strategy were shifted to the aim to establish profitable relations with the new independent African states, the maintenance of the racist structure of Rhodesia as a British responsibility became an obstacle to this aim. Recognition was accordingly withdrawn from Rhodesia, which proclaimed its independent sovereignty as a secessionist state, although the profitable interests of the British imperialists were in reality strongly entrenched, with easy lines of communication and trade through South Africa and Mozambique. The South African government continued to finance and arm Rhodesia as a client state conducting war against the African majority, and South African armed forces in Rhodesia played an active role in this war to defeat the African liberation fighters and hold the African majority in subjection. But with the fall of the Portuguese colonial empire in Africa this situation changed.

Curtains for the Racist Regime in Rhodesia

After the downfall of the Portuguese colonial empire the rulers of South Africa drew the lesson and revised their strategy with the aim to build up relations with the independent African states. For this purpose the previous strategy to finance and arm the racist regime

in Rhodesia as a combatant force, with direct participation of South African military personnel, against the African peoples was an obstacle requiring a swift reversal. The result was that the racist regime in Rhodesia, which had already been disowned by Britain, and condemned by the United Nations, now found that it was faced with a loss of support of its sole remaining major public backer, the South African government. In this situation the Smith government in Rhodesia found itself with no alternative save to adopt a new line of policy: to release the leaders of the African liberation movement, whom they had previously held and detained under penal conditions for a decade, and even up to the last moment before release had been denouncing as 'terrorist criminals', and whom they now had to release in order to open the way to negotiations with them for a possible settlement.

Political Portent of Zimbabwe

The outcome was the conference in Lusaka, the capital of Zambia, between the representatives of the Smith government and the leaders of the African liberation movement in Rhodesia, with the participation of President Kaunda of Zambia, President Nyerere of Tanzania and other rulers of African independent states. After an initial hitch had been overcome, a preliminary outline of agreed terms was announced by the Smith government on December 11. The terms which were announced provided for a cease-fire, the release of the detained African political leaders, and the convening of a Constitutional Convention at a future date with the participation of the African political leaders. At the same time the leaders of the African liberation movement in Rhodesia announced that they had reached a basis of unity between the various organisations. In a rapidly moving situation it would be premature to assume the future development of events in what should now be described in the terms of the African liberation movement as Zimbabwe. But this experience of Rhodesia has demonstrated the bankruptcy of the old racist apartheid structures in all the African countries outside South Africa, with implications for the future also in South Africa. And this is only the beginning of the changes now in prospect.

Europe's Future—Key Decisions for 1975

Alongside all the tremendous developments and changes, records of achievements or negative features, in every part of the world today there is no doubt that the key question of 1975 turns on the crucial decisions now due to be reached on the future of Europe. The

Conference on European Security and Co-operation has completed all its preparatory sessions during 1974 and is now due to hold its first summit meeting of Heads of Governments in 1975 to draw up its agreed conclusions for the future of a peaceful Europe. Europe has been the historic breeding ground of the two world wars which have ravaged mankind in the twentieth century. The first was the sequel of the preceding 'armed peace' of the six imperialist powers which had dominated Europe, and ended with the downfall of three of them and the victory of the first socialist revolution. The second arose from the conspiracy of the reactionary governments in Britain and France to build up fascism in central Europe as the weapon to destroy the socialist revolution, and ended only when the alliance of the British, French and American peoples and the peoples of Europe occupied by fascism with the power of the socialist state made possible a joint victory over fascism.

From the Cold War to Detente

This common victory of the peoples against fascism was endangered in the ensuing period, when the strategy of the cold war was inaugurated by US monopoly capitalism in the era of Truman and Dulles, drawing in the war-weakened West European states into the anti-Soviet military alliance of Nato. But the strength of the Soviet Union and the new socialist states and the resistance of the peoples defeated this strategy, and finally replaced the era of the cold war by the era of detente during the last three years. It is the future of this new peaceful Europe in the era of detente which will now come to the moment of the key decisions to be made in the final summit meeting of the European Security Conference in 1975. And it is characteristic of the sharpness of the issues involved that even at this late moment the agreement and date for this final summit meeting of the European Security Conference has still to be announced.

Vladivostok Landmark

Just as the most powerful forces of US monopoly capitalism had led the way after the second world war to inaugurate the era of the cold war organised in the anti-Soviet military alliance of Nato, so the modern most powerful forces of US monopoly capitalism were the first to recognise the bankruptcy of this policy and the necessity to come to terms with the rising new world of the countries of socialism and national liberation. The meeting of President Ford with General Secretary Brezhnev at Vladivostok on November 24 was the continuation of the series of US-Soviet summit meetings over these

three years of detente. The Vladivostok joint communiqué expressly endorsed the outcome of the preceding summits with the declaration that 'the two sides have reaffirmed their resolve to continue that line which they took up several years ago. The two powers regard the process of improvement of Soviet-American relations, not as a transient, but as a fundamental phenomenon.' This affirmation of the continuity of the policy of US-Soviet co-operation from Nixon to Ford showed that it was not a question of personalities, but that the decisive forces of the international policy of US monopoly capitalism in the modern era were consciously and continuously pursuing this policy of co-operation with the Soviet Union, even though not without criticism and cross-currents within the US, as expressed in the angry attack by Senator Jackson, the Democratic aspirant to presidential office, against the outcome of Vladivostok, and also with accompanying regional military activities of US reaction, the Pentagon and State Department, as in Vietnam.

Ten Year Programme for Detente

The US-Soviet agreements reached at Vladivostok, according to the preliminary announcements prior to the publication of the full documents, provided for a concrete programme of US-Soviet co-operation in the next ten years, with the visit of Brezhnev to the US in 1975, and the signing of the agreement limiting strategic arms in the same year, to be followed 'not later than 1981' by a review of the operation of the arms limitation agreement, in order to prepare for the next stage of advance to an agreement for the reduction of strategic arms. It is true that these provisions for agreed figures of limitation of strategic arms, covering very high figures in fact, fell far short of the Soviet proposal for an immediate reduction of the armed strength of the Soviet Union and the US, and for the speediest fulfilment of the aim of an international agreement for the destruction and prohibition of all nuclear weapons. In face of the present rapid extension of nuclear capacity to an increasing number of states, the necessary mobilisation of support to speed the advance to an international agreement for the banning of nuclear weapons is of obvious urgency. But in the context of the key significant role of the US and the USSR as the two powers most strongly equipped in this field even a joint agreement for limitation with specific figures, and the recognition of the aim to move towards a reduction of such arms, is preferable to the catastrophic alternative of a nuclear arms race. At the same time support for such a measure of limitation needs to be accompanied by the most active campaign for support for an inter-

national agreement for the reduction of nuclear arms with the aim of reaching as speedily as possible an international agreement for the complete destruction and prohibition of all nuclear and chemical weapons of war.

Conferences for Europe's Future

Alongside the decisive role of the European Security Conference which is due to hold its final session in 1975 to draw up the agreed conclusions of the thirty-five participating states, is closely linked the parallel accompanying conference for the reduction of arms in central Europe, which has been meeting in Vienna and Helsinki, and is also due to reach its concluding session and agreed conclusions in 1975. At the same time the longer-term process continues for the negotiation of the planned Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty. In 1975 there is further due to take place the Conference of Communist and Workers' Parties in Europe to promote the aim of 'peace, security, co-operation and social progress in Europe'. Especially important is the development of European trade union co-operation and unity, with exchanges of delegations from the widest range of European countries, and representative conferences, and with British trade unions playing a foremost active role in promoting this all-sided co-operation, as described by Bob Wright of the Engineers' Executive in our current issue.

Counter-Offensive of Reaction

All this advance of the era of detente has been accomplished in the face of opposition or obstructive manoeuvres on the part of representatives of the old system of the reactionary division of Europe, as embodied in the original foundation of Nato. Such hostility has received expression from some sections of the high command in Nato and in public declarations from influential spokesmen of these views in Nato on the alleged menace of Soviet arms and the Warsaw Pact. The US Defence Secretary Schlesinger made a public declaration in November calling for an increase of Nato arms as essential to counter the armed strength of the Warsaw Pact. After the departure of Brandt from his leadership of the German Federal Republic, and the narrow electoral defeat of Mitterand in the French presidential elections, hopes were expressed in some quarters that their successors might be less inclined to continue the development of the close relations which their predecessors had established with the Soviet Union. These calculations were disappointed. The first act of the new West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt was to visit the

Soviet Union and in close consultation with L. I. Brezhnev to draw up the joint agreement of the Soviet Union and the German Federal Republic for extensive co-operation, including large scale economic plans, while the close Franco-Soviet co-operation was carried further forward by the visit of L. I. Brezhnev to Paris and his cordial reception by the new Premier d'Estaing. When the late Tory government expelled a host of Soviet diplomats, they had hoped that their example would stimulate similar action in Europe. On the contrary the governments of France and the GFR took advantage of the opportunity to expand their trade with the Soviet Union, while in Britain the Tory policy brought heavy losses to British interests and trade. The replacement of the Tory government by Labour, and the maintenance of the Labour government through two successive elections, gave Labour the opportunity and responsibility to restore close British-Soviet relations and co-operation.

Crisis of World Capitalist Economy

The situation is complicated by the stormy character of the present extreme crisis of the economic disorganisation, currency rocketing, violent inflation and counter-inflation, and consequent instability of the internal political situation and intensified international divisions and conflicts affecting all the leading countries of the capitalist world, in contrast with the continuing crisis-free record advance of socialist construction. President Ford on November 25 warned Americans that they were heading towards 'the worst and longest recession for thirty years' (*Daily Telegraph*, November 26, 1974). The *Times* on June 18 wrote of 'America's Policy of Detente: Realpolitik or Russian Roulette?'. The devaluation of the dollar let loose the storm which had been partially concealed by the maintenance of the former agreed rates of exchange; but this maintenance bore less and less relation to reality as the price of gold in the free market rose. US financial policy sought to maintain the role of the dollar as the recognised world currency laid down by Bretton Woods, and in view of the devaluation of the dollar to establish the system of 'special drawing rights' on the basis of the International Monetary Fund as the new world currency displacing gold from any role (in fact the value of the 'special drawing right' was expressed in gold).

Dollars and Gold

The soaring price of gold on the free market pricked the American illusions, and demonstrated as always in periods of crisis and heavy

inflation that gold was the only objective measure of value not subject to manipulation by a particular national government. Accordingly an alternative line emphasised the necessity of restoring the gold value of currencies as a necessary part of the fight against inflation. *Pravda* on November 5 published an article by A. Stranichenko advocating as one of measures for the fight against inflation, 'the restoration of the convertibility of national currencies, and of course that includes the dollar, into gold.' The editor of the *Times* William Rees-Mogg, published in December a book under the title *The Cure of Inflation* advocating a return to an international gold standard. A City view that the American campaign to demonetise gold might have the opposite effect was described by the *Guardian* on December 4 in the following terms:

One London banker put it last night: 'If the US authorities are stronger they will have effectively demonetised gold; if not they will find they have effectively opened the door to dollar convertibility in gold.'

This battle on the role of the dollar and of gold is a symptom of the present crisis of world capitalist economy.

Britain Storm Centre

In the present crisis of world capitalist economy Britain is at the centre of the storm. The scale of inflation which has aroused panic alarms and emergency programmes in the US and West Germany to combat it as a menace to the essential foundations of a stable society is a relatively limited inflation in contrast with the soaring inflation which British monopoly capitalism has practised at the same time as delivering the most vehement sermons on the need to make the fight against inflation the supreme aim of economic policy to solve the present crisis. The two lines are not so contradictory as they might appear. The record inflation reflected in the November record total of £453 million overseas trade deficit, equivalent to an annual rate of £6,400 million; the record rise of retail prices by 18.3 per cent during the twelve months to November; the record expansion of military expenditure by £100 million to £3,700 million in the current year; the expansion of Britain's contribution to the Common Market from £69 million in 1970 to £2,075 million in the current year; the increase in rates by an officially recorded average of 25 per cent with much greater amounts in practice in many cases; all constitute powerful weapons to cut the standards and increase the exploitation of the widest sections of the people. At the same time the programme of rigorous measures to conquer inflation by imposing cuts on all

services, phasing out of support to nationalised industries and imposition of new taxes or heavy increases of existing taxes reinforce the offensive on standards from the blows of inflation by imposing additional burdens and costs in the name of the duty to combat inflation as the supreme task of the present period requiring sacrifices from all.

Challenge to the British People

It is true that the Labour government has made attempts to mitigate in some degree the harshness of the cuts and burdens by limited measures for some increase in pensions and in provision for those on supplementary benefits. But the total effect of this attempted mitigation is limited and does not in any respect diminish the main offensive, which is expressed in the crippling interest rate of $11\frac{1}{2}$ per cent governing all costs and prices. Until the political working class and democratic movement has reached the essential clarity of aim and effective unity of action to begin decisive changes to bring down the heavy costs and burdens crippling the British economy, the best intended attempts at partial concessions or mitigations will not hold off the blows of the deepening crisis, in which sterling is already visibly staggering. It is not surprising that alarm was awakened by the announcement on November 18:

Mr Gordon Richardson, Governor of the Bank of England, said in Kuwait yesterday that there was no possibility that sterling would be devalued (*Times*, November 19, 1974).

This denial may of course be perfectly correct. But those with longer memories will recall that this type of denial has always been the standard prelude to devaluation.

British Working Class Supreme Responsibility

The future of Britain is on the anvil in the present crisis. The present dominant Tory policy represented so far by the leadership of Heath (under challenge from advocates of more aggressive policies) is to wait for the divisions in the political labour movement to provide a future opportunity for a come-back. It is essential to defeat these calculations of Tory reaction counting on the division of the political labour movement to help them back to power. But it is also essential that the indispensable necessity of unity shall not be the cover for the repetition of the type of policies which have led to disastrous consequences in the past. The effective unity of all sections of the working class and democratic movement needs to be mobilised

around a fighting programme which embodies the demands and policies repeatedly adopted by representative delegate conferences over successive years. The British working class has shown the capacity during these recent years to mobilise and win victories on the basis of such a united fighting programme. Important steps forward have been achieved during the recent period to overcome many obsolete divisive practices, and establish more effective democratic representation in the various organs of the political labour movement. But the essential democratic right has still to be won, and urgently needs to be won, for the affiliated unions to be able to elect delegates of their choice in whom they have confidence as representatives of the cause of the working class to the political gatherings of the labour movement. The record success and strength which has been achieved by the democratic unity of all sections of the working class, communists and non-communists without distinction or division, has been shown in the advance of the TUC on this basis to an increase of strength eclipsing all previous records. The same advance can be achieved in the political labour movement, and needs to be achieved, in order that in Britain, the oldest country of capitalist industry and united working class organisation, the British working class shall be ready to meet the conditions of the present phase of British capitalism in crisis, and shall be able to fulfil its full progressive role in unity with the advancing progressive forces of the working class in all the leading countries of Europe and the world.

R.P.D.

R.P.D. had seen the proofs of this issue of Labour Monthly before his sudden death early on December 20. Most of the pages had already been made up. The only changes have been in the front cover and the insertion of this note.

CORRECTION

In our December 1974 issue on page 537, the voting figures given on lines 6 and 7 should have been '102-4' not '105-4'.

Under the heading *Dangers of Crisis in the Middle East*, in lines 7 and 14, the name of Golda Meir appeared in error: this should have been Y. Rabin.

The Technical, Administrative and Supervisory Section of the AUEW

*will be doing all possible to
ensure that its members and
all workers enjoy a prosperous
and peaceful 1975*

Arthur Housden
President

Ken Gill
General Secretary

**AUEW-TASS, Onslow Hall, Little Green, Richmond
Surrey**



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R. SNEDDON, President
E. MARSDEN, General Secretary

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society, in which peace and social
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TOWARDS INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION UNITY

Bob Wright

Executive Council Member
Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers
(Engineering Section)

DURING December, the international trade union movement met in London to consider vital and important elements affecting the interests of workers in the automobile and heavy vehicle manufacturing industries and sectors of supply to those industries. Unions from communist, capitalist, Western and Eastern countries joined together to achieve an exchange of experience and of information and technology, and to draw conclusions on a united programme to remove the growing hazards—environmentally and in connection with the working standards and conditions that affect the day to day lives of hundreds of thousands of workers throughout the world.

In opening statements to the conference from Hugh Scanlon—AUEW, Michael Foot—Secretary for Employment, Len Murray—TUC general secretary, Jack Jones—TUC and Transport and General Workers' Union, and Nicolai V. Dragunov—president of the Soviet Metal and Machine Builders' Union, each underlined the importance of the conference and the contribution it could make towards rational policies.

It is not surprising, therefore, that we saw shadow cabinet minister Walker sharpening the knives of the 'cold war' at this daring attempt to involve workers from all countries, irrespective of the political system under which they are employed, in the belief that this threatens the very existence of the system which he seeks to maintain. He, of course, accompanied his attack by the rattling of sabres, and informed the British people, in the middle of the most serious economic crisis brought about by his government, that we must not reduce the enormous bill of £3,700 million per annum on armaments but must increase our contribution to the so-called defence of the West. Working class and progressive thinkers will recognise the old hackneyed, worn-out, 'cold war' philosophy that this represents.

The British trade union movement has for long been outward looking and can be proud of the fact that, although many political divisions have existed within the unions and the TUC, it has remained

as a single voice—not always united, but determined to express the maximum possible unity on behalf of the British working class. It is vital that we extend that principle throughout the world. In confronting multinational capitalism we need multinational trade unionism. We must achieve a wider unity amongst not only trade unions but international and national trade union bodies.

This leads to the conclusion that, in keeping with the policy of my union and with the wide support of the majority of unions within the TUC, we should pursue a policy of detente and wider co-operation between trade unions covered by the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) and other international bodies. That unity can only be built on mutual interests and it is significant that, stripped of all political differences, workers are workers in whatever land. Those trade unionists who have supported this policy recognised the threat which emerged from international capitalism as exemplified in Chile, where democracy was destroyed not by the left but by the Walkers of this world.

In 1971 the Trades Union Congress called for growing co-operation between the ICFTU and the WFTU because we felt that the time had come to put the 'cold war' behind us. The splits in the trade union movement arose in 1949 directly as a result of the rift that occurred at that time. For 25 years that rift has profoundly blunted the efforts of the separate bodies as well as the trade secretariats associated with them.

This tendency has been strongly reflected in the European trade union movement, which has been weakened for far too long by the effects of these divisions.

There are a growing number of moves afoot to achieve a wider and more substantial unity between European trade unions. The clearest example is the decision of the European TUC to expand its membership beyond the affiliates of the ICFTU, despite pressure from the US and certain European unions—notably the West Germans. We have been party to initiatives in exchanges of delegations, and the growing recognition that this can only be to the benefit of workers throughout the world calls for a development of that policy and a dismissal of any attempts to recreate the old divisions.

To those who say we are moving too fast I would reply that we are not moving fast enough. There can be no doubt that British capitalism has entered a new political stage: inflation is ever increasing, energy supplies are critical, and we wait daily for a merciful end to the stock market. We don't know in which guise British capitalism will try to

solve its problems this time but certainly it will be at the expense of the workers we represent. We know their efforts will be harsh. Workers will need more than ever to stand solid to protect themselves. So the whole of the trade union movement must be urged to develop and support ties with all international trade union organisations, to take up the approaches from Eastern Europe and show our good faith. Only in this way can we hope to fight multinational companies and governments who connive together to defeat the working class.

The Labour government has begun to develop a broader understanding of these problems. Certainly moves which indicate positive steps towards unity at home and advance of the accountability of industry to the whole of the people, and not just the shareholders and the City, are essential ingredients in developing our own community and society. I hope they will encourage the growth of unity within the trade union movement and throughout the world, and certainly this can only be to the ultimate advantage of those we represent.

THE ECONOMIC TROUBLES OF THE IRISH REPUBLIC

Noel Harris*

Divisional Officer for the Republic of Ireland
Association of Scientific, Technical and Managerial Staffs

SINCE December 1970, the freedom and ability of individual trade unions in the Irish Republic to negotiate on behalf of their members have been severely restricted by a series of national agreements. There have been three such agreements in the period, and the current one, negotiated by the Executive Council of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions with the various organisations of employers and the government, as an employer, through the Employer Labour Conference, is due for renewal.

At times such as this it has become the practice for stern warnings on the dangerous economic situation to be issued by both official and unofficial quarters, the media and others. In the last few months there have been speeches from ministers, solemn warnings from An Taoiseach (prime minister) Liam Cosgrave, reports from the Central Bank and other institutions and latterly a white paper entitled *A National Partnership*.

* Noel Harris is a member of the Executive Council of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions.

The theme common to all these statements and documents is amply summarised by quoting the opening sentence of the latter. 'The government are calling for a spirit of national partnership at a time when the future is threatened by grave economic difficulties.' What is patently missing from all of the strictures is the realisation that the 'grave economic difficulties' are part of the general crisis of capitalism arising from the inescapable economic fact that the exploitation of the third world suppliers of basic raw materials, oil in particular, by the developed Western world is quickly coming to an end and that nothing short of a fundamental reorganisation of our society is what is called for. Successive Irish governments have adopted an infantile and slavish adherence to Brussels which has done little to lessen the dependence of the Irish economy on Britain but has allowed Ireland to become, economically at least, a mere appendage to the Common Market. They have failed to note that the crisis is seemingly 'passing by' the socialist countries: whilst the West faces a possible runaway inflation, their economies seem characterised by stable prices, full employment and stable planned growth. The facts have been avoided or ignored, so the obvious lesson has been missed.

Instead of recognising and advocating these necessary changes, the proposals which are being made are designed to place the brunt of the burden firmly on the shoulders of those least able to bear it, the workers and small farmers of Ireland.

The alternatives being presented are the old traditional conservative reaction of deflation, or the relatively new notion of borrowing long term to finance a short term moderate growth rate. Both of these so-called solutions, however, have the drawback that they can only operate in the short term and leave the real problems to be faced at some unspecified later date.

Deflation with its drastic cuts in public spending and investment would result in a massive increase in unemployment. At a time, however, when unemployment, in a country with a population of just three million, is some 80,000, and when the most conservative estimates project a figure of around 100,000 in the new year without any deliberate inducement, deflation is not really politically possible for the government coalition of Labour and Fine Gael.

It is being posed as an alternative in order to frighten the trade union movement into acquiescence with the preferred choice of pursuing the second policy which is in reality only marginally less burdensome for workers. Whilst deflation must be ruled out on political grounds the very practicality of the other alternative must be questioned.

With a current foreign payments deficit of approximately £300 million making a ratio of 10 per cent of her gross national product (GNP), Ireland is hardly a country with great attractions for foreign financiers. Although the government has announced loans of around £15.5 million in the last few weeks, it seems highly improbable that the kind of money necessary will be attracted except perhaps at very grave and great cost to the national sovereignty and independence of Ireland. In only 25 years of accumulating public debt Ireland has a proportionately higher debt than that accumulated by Britain over 300 years. The Central Bank has estimated that by early in 1975, without taking into account any additional borrowing by way of deliberate economic policy, the foreign debt of the government and state agencies will amount to some £500 million or 16 per cent of the GNP.

The public debt must be serviced by the taxpayer and with the existing cost at some £180 million per annum or roughly one quarter of entire tax revenue it is apparent that the crippling cost of any additional borrowing can only be borne in the long run by a massive reduction in essential government spending, with all that that entails for social welfare, health, education and other items, to say nothing of employment levels, accompanied by a huge increase in taxation. In the long term, and perhaps sooner than its advocates expect, this kind of policy runs into the same disabilities as the conservative approach and no less firmly places the burden on the mass of workers.

In spite of the paucity and temerity of ideas from official quarters, 'the general crisis of capitalism' presents Ireland with not only a real alternative but a real opportunity: an opportunity to begin to assert the sovereignty so painfully achieved, to begin to make the necessary changes in the structure of her society and perhaps to emerge from the crisis, poised for a rapid advance in the living standards and well-being of her people. The government should act now to ensure that the new-found wealth in natural resources of minerals and oil are developed in the interests and to the benefit of the people of Ireland and not of the monopolies and multinational corporations. Without any traumatic political upheaval a model for doing just this exists in Norway.

In a situation where the commercial banks have fanned the flames of inflation by massively increasing credit and their own profits, where the pattern of bank lending is as shown in the following table, there is a clear need to ensure that such loans are for productive purposes: for example, increased funds for the building and construction industry are vitally necessary. The only sure way to do this is

to bring the whole of the banking system under public ownership and control.

Bank Lending (per cent)*

	February 1974	August 1974
Manufacturing	21.7	20.8
Property companies	5.9	6.6
Agriculture	14.0	14.9
Personal loans	19.5	19.0
Building/construction	7.2	7.4

* From Central Bank Quarterly Bulletins

The Industrial Development Authority could be transformed from an agency promoting the establishment of branches of foreign companies through massive hand-outs and tax holidays, into one promoting the social ownership and control of industries geared to the home market and home needs. Despite the obsession of the government and its agencies with so-called 'export-led growth', some 75 per cent of Irish working people still depend on the home market for their livelihood.

The most valuable and abundant of Ireland's natural resources, her land, has been most shamefully abused and neglected, not least by the vigour with which EEC agricultural policies have been embraced. The Irish countryside has been turned into a huge cattle ranch producing beef which no one can afford to buy. The current policy of paying slaughter premiums to beef fatteners (currently costing the exchequer some £6 million per year) is directly aiding the large farmers and accentuating the drift from the land of small and medium farmers. The farm modernisation scheme is specifically designed to eliminate huge numbers of small farmers. These policies vitally impinge on the services and industrial sectors by reducing demand and thereby increasing the pressure on jobs, and should be changed.

Instead of bemoaning their helplessness as a small nation in the face of world phenomena, the Irish government should begin to assert their nationhood. They should stop being the 'good boys' of the EEC club and realise with Lenin:

From a standpoint of the economic conditions of imperialism—i.e. the export of capital and the division of the world by the 'advanced' and 'civilised' colonial powers—a United States of Europe, under capitalism, is either impossible or reactionary.

(V. I. Lenin, *On the Slogan for a United States of Europe*)

Were the Irish government to embark on such a policy under the impetus of a free and vigorous trade union movement, then the future would indeed be bright.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Betty Sinclair

THE procrastination and indecision of the British Labour government towards the situation in Northern Ireland is leading to a worsening of the political crisis and is laying the basis for a confrontation that may lead to civil war. As the days go by, the serious political questions are being paralleled by the growing economic problems that threaten the economy of the province. Such a situation, by its very nature, must have serious repercussions in Britain; since the Birmingham bombings, the blow has indeed fallen there with the introduction—within a matter of hours in both houses of parliament—of anti-democratic legislation which threatens the liberties of 55 million British citizens.

Since the collapse of the Northern Ireland Assembly and executive, as a direct result of the impotence of the British government in May 1974 when confronted with the neo-fascist putsch of the Unionist ultras and their paramilitary organisations, and the re-introduction of direct rule, a political vacuum has been created. The Labour government renewed the Emergency Provisions Act for a further six months (thus reaffirming their intention to continue with internment) and published a white paper setting out their proposal to establish a *Consultative Convention* (following an election for which the date has not yet been set) where elected representatives would begin to discuss proposals for the future running of Northern Ireland. The Convention would be given from six to nine months to submit proposals to the Westminster government *for decision, or otherwise*.

At the present time, following the destruction of the Long Kesh and Magilligan internment camps by the Republican internees and those awaiting internment or release; the shooting of an internee who was, with others, attempting to escape; and the continued ill treatment and arrest of males of all ages from the anti-Unionist areas in particular, there has been a great upsurge against the injustice and inhumanity of internment. The refusal to repeal the Emergency Provisions Act before the report of the (Lord) Gardiner commission is published has brought about more violent actions from all quarters, including the forces of the British army. Mr Merlyn Rees, Northern Ireland Secretary of State, continues to excuse all the actions of the British army, and has but a few words of condemnation for the Unionist right-wing paramilitary organisations which are carrying out a deadly and cold campaign of assassinations against Catholic citizens. The political bias shown in the actions and decisions taken

at Stormont Castle, Belfast, and at Westminster only increases the bitterness and despair of great sections of those in the anti-Unionist camp and gives credence to the anti-working class bombing campaign of the Provisional IRA.

In this situation the Unionist right wing, organised under the banner of the United Ulster Unionist Council (led by Harry West, William Craig, Ian Paisley and now joined by the arch racist Enoch Powell) have dug their heels in. Feeling confident of their successes in the February and October Westminster elections, they have refused all overtures from the Northern Ireland office and other political parties for talks, and state that they will enter into no discussions until after the Consultative Convention elections. It is their determination to sweep the boards in that election and confront the British government, from a position of strength and claiming to represent the 'majority' of the electorate, with a demand for a return of 'their parliament at Stormont'. Such a future fills anti-Unionists and many Unionists with grave forebodings. The leaders of the 'majority' have already stated that, if such a result does come about, they will require those who wish to work and advocate policies for a united Ireland either to accept the 'verdict of the majority', i.e. to remain within the United Kingdom, or to emigrate or be eliminated. The continued display of political weakness on the part of the Wilson government does not inspire the anti-Unionist front to place any great hopes in either that government, or the government which the ultras hope to see established in Northern Ireland with the blessing of Westminster . . . which could only be a neo- or full blown fascist government.

The promise to hold an election for the setting up of the Convention was followed by a green paper, *Northern Ireland, Discussion Paper, Finance and the Economy*, published by the Northern Ireland Office in September 1974. This paper attempted to reveal how the economy of Northern Ireland was bolstered up with the aid of subsidies from Whitehall. It did not reveal what moneys were taken out by way of profits by British and other foreign multinational corporations (who benefit most from British subsidies to industry and the creation of an infrastructure). The threat of withdrawal of British (and other) industry from the area (and the usefulness of the area as a base of exploitation) was quickly answered by Mr Cambell Adamson, Director General of the Confederation of British Industry, when he spoke in Belfast on October 31, 1974, and stated that 'any notion of a British withdrawal from the province was firmly rejected by the CBI.' Northern Ireland, he stated, was 'too

important a part of the fabric of British industry for any such move to be contemplated.'

The green paper revealed that the Gross National Product of Northern Ireland was, in 1972, only 73 per cent of the UK average. Living standards were much lower than in the rest of the UK (only roads compared favourably!); since 1950 some 106,000, or 56 per cent, of jobs in shipbuilding, linen and agriculture had been lost; trade was firmly in British control with 63 per cent of all manufactured goods and 66 per cent of agricultural produce going to Britain, and only 22 per cent of manufacturing companies in local control. (Great Britain controls 45 per cent of companies employing 250 or more workers, the US 20 per cent and other EEC countries 10 per cent). The Belfast shipyard's recent accounts (October) revealed a deficit of £33 million, after £68 million has been vested in it from the British and Northern Ireland exchequer . . . the former have stated their willingness to plough in further millions of pounds on the understanding that, if the 10,000 production workers do not make the yard pay, then the cost of subsidies will be deducted from the funds provided for social amenities.

The green paper dealt largely with *manufacturing industry* and *agriculture*: no attempt was made to assess the millions of pounds extracted from Northern Ireland by the banks, insurance, finance, building societies and British department stores which dominate distribution. A housing report issued in December 1974 stated that nearly 20 per cent of the 455,000 dwellings are unfit for human habitation . . . much worse than in any other part of the UK . . . even though 50 per cent of the present stock has been built since 1945. Figures issued recently show that emigration is running at the rate of 12,000 a year, and that figure does not include the thousands who are going to the UK, as that area is stated to be 'within the jurisdiction' and no separate figures are kept. These people are getting out because of the continued violence, loss of jobs through factory closures and intimidation and loss of homes from the same cause. The Northern Ireland Electricity Service is said to be millions of pounds 'in the red'; the gas industry is similarly affected, and city and country bus services are only able to operate because of the huge subventions from the public purse.

The British government has issued another paper, *Forms of Power-Sharing*, and intends to produce *How the Convention Will Work*. In the given situation, such papers will have no real affect and will only help prolong 'the talk' and put off the time for action.

(Continued on page 26)

RELEASE MARY K



Mary Kennedy



Evelyn Gilroy

Billy and Mary Kennedy have seven children, four of their own and three foster-children whose parents were killed in a car crash. Mary's sister, Evelyn Gilroy, has two children and is single. Mary's husband was arrested in June 1971 and sentenced to 10 years. He appealed, was found not guilty, but was detained under the Special Powers Act. He is in Long Kesh. Mary was arrested on May 13, 1974. She was held under an Interim Custody Order until June 24. A Commissioner heard her case under new British government legislation, the Emergency Provisions Act. Her accusers were secret and were not cross-examined. Mary's sister was interned in June. Their nine children are 'political orphans'.

Before her arrest Mary was a community organiser. She cared for old people and handicapped children. She was co-founder of an adventure playground where she had been a voluntary worker for four years. Her health is deteriorating in jail. She has one kidney and that has been infected. Billy Kennedy issued a statement in September 1974:

'We are both held without charge or trial. . . . We have never been given the opportunity to answer in public the allegations against us. We . . . [have] to give up visiting time with our children . . . to interview potential housemothers. . . . Under these "humane" conditions how can my wife or I possibly make arrangements for the . . . welfare of our seven children?'

The Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association is calling for protest

INEDY CAMPAIGN

meetings, advertisements in the press, marches and vigils, and letters and telegrams to Merlyn Rees who, as Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, can release Mrs Kennedy at any time. The case is before the European Commission in Strasbourg, under the European Convention on Human Rights.

Letters of encouragement can be sent to Mary Kennedy (detainee), Armagh Jail, ARMAGH. Reports on action taken should be sent to the Civil Rights Association, 2 Marquis Street, BELFAST, BT1 1JJ. The Association can supply further information to trade union and other bodies requesting it.



Tooled leather purse made by internees (dairse) in Long Kesh

(Continued from page 23)

What is needed is that the British workers through the trade union and labour movement will bring to bear the greatest possible pressure for an immediate ending of internment, repeal of all repressive laws including the Emergency Provisions Act, withdrawal of the British armed forces to barracks, and for the enactment of a Bill of Rights which will, in law, guarantee political and democratic rights for all the people, including the right of self-determination to be part of the Irish nation.

Mr William Whitelaw, former Conservative Northern Ireland Secretary of State, has stated that British cities would be dragged in if full scale civil war ever broke out in Northern Ireland. He said that withdrawal of the troops would be a 'considerable moral disgrace' because of the loss of life it would cause. Already over 1,200 lives have been lost and each morning brings its toll of sorrow to some households. . . . The presence of thousands of British soldiers on the streets has not stopped the killing and the murders. When a British Tory prates of 'moral disgrace', it must be understood that the continuation of British rule in Northern Ireland is the real moral disgrace and has been since 1920.

The anti-Unionist forces in Northern Ireland began, in 1968, to campaign and work for one man one vote, an end to discrimination in the allocation of jobs in local and central government and in public sector housing and for the repeal of the Special Powers Act. The Civil Rights Movement's demands were very modest indeed and were based on the democratic rights then existing in Britain. Instead of progress on those demands, today in Northern Ireland there exists military rule in all its nakedness.

There will be no possibility, despite horrible tragedies such as that of Birmingham, of civil war coming to Northern Ireland or any British city if the British trade union and labour movement speaks out and acts, increases its awareness of what is really happening here and takes the necessary steps to assist the democratic forces in Northern Ireland. A movement which defeated the Tories and their Industrial Relations Act can and must defeat the Tory right-wing Labour bipartisan policy which bears heavily on all our people. Mr Merlyn Rees, during the very short debate on Northern Ireland at the recent British Labour Party conference, stated:

We [the British government] have a responsibility for Northern Ireland. There is no other government there. The government of the south [of Ireland] wants no responsibility. . . . In the long run the problems of Northern Ireland must be solved by the people . . . themselves. We will never solve it. The people of Northern Ireland will.

The statement of a statesman? Or one demented? Certainly, if the people of Northern Ireland are given the tools of democracy—and without undue interference from Britain ('Britain's financial interests') we can solve our problems. Take away the tools of repression and military rule. Give us the tools of democracy and progressive legislation.

THE JENKINS LEGISLATION

F. H. Amphlett Micklewright
Barrister

THERE can be no doubt but that violence has now come to Britain. Bombing attacks have been made at Guildford, Woolwich and Birmingham, with loss of life and the infliction of serious injuries. Explosive devices dropped through the slot have turned letter boxes into powerful bombs. An anti-Irish backlash has acted as a divisive force among working people. It cannot be pretended that the situation is other than serious, although the incidents are only a fraction of what has been suffered in Northern Ireland for over five years, making little impression upon the public mind in Britain.

The forces of reaction have been busy. Some Tory newspapers have taken care to comment in a manner which can only assist the creation of general panic, whilst the minions of the 'National Front' have not been slow to emphasise their friendship with the extreme Protestant groups in Northern Ireland. A general clamour for something to be done is the natural outcome of the publicity and the reportage.

The Home Secretary, Roy Jenkins, is well known to belong to the right wing of the Labour Party, and his response has been a natural outcome of his political position. Measures he described as Draconian were rushed through parliament in a matter of hours, and the Terrorism Act 1974 has become the law of the land.

The Act is openly one-sided: the first and most prominent step taken under the new law is that Jenkins has banned the IRA. Forty police chiefs advised against this step simply because a banned organisation tends to run underground. The political branch, the Sinn Fein, has also been banned although it is one of the organisations to which Merlyn Rees has restored legality in Northern Ireland.

Presumably, members of this organisation, threatened by police on this side of the water, have only to take refuge in Belfast to gain legal protection, a somewhat Alice-in-Wonderland situation!

It was said that the police have been advised to play the situation coolly and to avoid harassment. What would have been the situation if this order had not gone forth is difficult to imagine. 'Playing it cool' means the banning of the Official IRA, a body which called for a cease-fire two years ago. It also means the suppression of the Official Sinn Féin and the internment of leaders of the Clan Na H Éireann, a body closely linked with the Officials. In short, Jenkins has set the stage for a general political repression of the Irish republican movement in this country. This one-sided action does little to suggest that the bipartisan politics to which the Labour Party has committed itself look forward to any final settlement in terms of the abolition of partition out of which the whole of the trouble and the bloodshed have arisen.

Allied to this policy of suppression is a full provision for detention without trial of IRA suspects. Exactly what is an IRA suspect? A person proved to be a member of the IRA can be convicted under the new Act. Suspicion should not be enough to incur penalty but Jenkins has here laid the foundation for some policy akin to Long Kesh. Suspects from the Republic of Ireland can be returned to their country of origin. But those from the six counties are in a different position. If a Northern Ireland citizen has lived in this country for 20 years he cannot be deported, although he may be detained. Residence for a lesser period enables him to be deported to Northern Ireland and forbidden to return.

The provision is most curious, and it is easy to see why Enoch Powell and Molyneux, the Ulster Protestant leader at Westminster, are outraged. Jenkins has afforded legal precedent for defining where a UK citizen shall live. He has done so by treating Northern Ireland as something other than the rest of the UK. In short, he has simply scouted the demand of Powell and Paisley that Northern Ireland should be regarded as integrated into the UK as a whole by treating it as a detached province. It could presumably therefore be wholly detachable from the UK in future legislation.

Certainly Jenkins has created a new position in constitutional law. In *Calvin's Case*, decided in 1606 over the position of a Scotsman in London, it was held that a subject of his Majesty could not become an alien in any domain over which his Majesty ruled and that therefore his status remained the same wherever he moved in the UK. This old proposition which has shaped not a little of the law of

citizenship has been undercut at a stroke by the Jenkins legislation.

It is also a piece of legislation in which lurks the whole fascist danger of imprisonment without trial and of internment without specific charge. In modern times, the only parallel to this approach in Britain occurred during the second world war under Regulation 18B, which gave the Home Secretary that power over persons 'reasonably' suspected to be of hostile origins or association. Whilst many of the detainees were notorious fascists, some were the victims of spite and of personal grudges. Writing in his work *Law and Orders*, the eminent jurist Sir C. K. Allen, raised the question as to whether 18B was not a dangerous precedent and a serious affront to constitutional law. Certainly the weighty criticisms of one of the ablest of modern legal writers in these fields might well be read anew when Jenkins's actions are weighed up.

A section of the Terrorism Act vastly increases the powers of the police. A police officer may detain a suspect for questioning for up to 48 hours. It is not good enough to say that this has been done already, when the Price sisters and their associates were held at Ealing police station for five days and when a charge was only brought finally under a threat of habeas corpus proceedings. That conduct was flagrantly illegal and the police well know the fact.

The real evil of the Jenkins approach is that this conduct is now made legal in cases where the Terrorism Act applies. After two days, the police must get the permission of the Home Secretary if the suspect is to be detained for another five days. Presumably, after seven days, a charge should be brought, although even this can be avoided by making a detention order upon the suspect and thus still holding him under circumstances in which the questioning can continue. The whole process is one which should be repellent to any concept of British justice. It is contrary to the Habeas Corpus Amendment Acts, 1679 and 1816. It suggests a treatment of suspects and of detention without trial which habeas corpus specifically sought to prevent.

The Jenkins legislation is an ill foreboding so far as peace within Ireland is concerned. But another serious aspect of the issue should be considered. The policy of legal repression followed out in Northern Ireland—anonymous witnesses, hearsay evidence and the abolition of juries, which has followed the Diplock Report and which has gone hand in hand with internment—has meant the destruction of democratic civil liberties within the six counties and has bred terrorism and yet more terrorism. As a result, the whole issue has been translated in practice to Britain, and Jenkins has met this problem by

extending the conception of legal repression to this country.

It is in no spirit of exaggeration that the Birmingham bombings could be held forth as a parallel to the Reichstag fire within the evolution of fascism in Britain. Measures of sheer repression taken against 'Irish terrorists' today could be extended to striking miners or angry pickets on some other occasion! It is significant that the mood of hysteria is used by the National Front and its allies to preach a form of anti-Irish racism. Indeed, immediately after the Birmingham bombings, factory marches took place reminiscent of the dockers' march on behalf of Enoch Powell. Banners with slogans such as 'Paddy Go Home!' were conspicuous. It is difficult to feel that these outbursts were spontaneous and were not directed by local fascist groups.

The Jenkins legislation must be regarded as a highly dangerous piece of machinery which would be available in any future attempt to crush our civil and political liberty in this country.

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R W Briginshaw
General Secretary

SOME DANGERS FROM THE RIGHT

Gerry Cohen

NOT so much has been heard since last summer of the talk about private armies, but it would be a dangerous mistake to assume that this was just newspaper silly-season gossip. The ex-generals and colonels who made the headlines last August are still organising and recruiting. Their oft-repeated claims that they are non-military, non-uniformed and *non-political* are exposed as lies, out of their own mouths. Retired General Sir Walter Walker stated in August 1974:

At the present stage the first priority of Unison [his particular private army] is to select local controllers whose immediate task will be to compile a register of trustworthy citizens whose unswerving allegiance and loyalty is to the crown and who have a high respect for law and order.

All the applicants for membership of Unison were being vetted under the control of another retired army officer, Lt Colonel Robert Butler. In a letter to the *Times* he made his political position abundantly clear:

The strongest weapon we are providing is the moral one, namely that an overwhelming number of the British people wants no part of Communism, and is prepared to support any government which determines to halt it.

To write off these people as joke military blimp characters would be a great mistake. Paralleling their activities is the notorious Monday Club, which produced its infamous discussion document calling for immediate preparations to be made to keep the country going during major strikes. They want a stockpiling of supplies and a register of volunteers prepared to keep essential services running. Yet another pointer was the article in the Monday Club quarterly journal, written by a serving officer, in which he said:

For at least two years now it has been a topic of conversation in the messes of the army that sooner or later it would be called upon to act in England.

He went on to say that the army had shown a considerable distrust of 'socialist politicians', and that 'it has emerged as a force that has to be reckoned with in political circles.' The fact that the emergency resolution on private armies submitted by the Civil and Public Services Association (CPSA) to last September's TUC was not accepted—on the rather flimsy technical grounds that it was not a genuine emergency issue—may be some indication of the under-

estimation of the seriousness of this threat among sections of the labour movement.

It is not only the 'lunatic fringe' of the extreme right wing which is publicly advocating the private army: Geoffrey Rippon proposed that a Tory government should set up a citizen's reserve force for 'home defence and duties in aid of the civil power'. There is no disputing the class nature of such proposals—nor the class origins of their initiators. When some of their own class allies reject the 'private armies' protagonists, they do so because they are worried that the crude strike-breaking approach exposes the real position of the ruling class—not because they are opposed to strike breaking.

The precarious existence of a Labour government is by no means any guarantee that monopoly capitalism will not resort to increasingly anti-democratic practices if it feels it is in its class interest to do so. The supremacy of their class interest over what they themselves like to talk about as the 'national interest' is clearly exposed by the completely unscrupulous pressures exerted on the government in the economic sphere. There can be no question but that there has been an organised, concerted programme of underinvestment in order to influence government policy. Despite the fact that Britain is probably the largest base in the world for multinational firms, it has the lowest rate of investment of any country in Europe. The argument has been used by firms cutting back on their investment programmes that they have a deteriorating cash flow position, and the prospect of inadequate profits. Yet there is no shortage of liquidity funds for investment overseas.

We should note that there is a sinister precedent for this sort of reactionary influence being brought to bear. The conscious drastic curtailment of investment in Chile was a very big factor in creating the economic conditions which formed part of the background to Allende's tragic removal. And it is not all that remote a parallel, when one considers the other rightist, anti-democratic tendencies that are evident, and growing, in so many different spheres. Remember the clear class position taken by the Confederation of British Industry president, Ralph Bateman, just before the last general election?...

If many of the Labour administration declared objectives in their manifesto are put to parliament, the CBI will be moving into the realms of conflict with the government and we shall need all the support and help which members can provide.

'Members' are indeed providing support and help for their own class, by their deliberate withholding of investment in order to exercise

pressure on the government—pressure to which chancellor Healey in fact succumbed in his November budget.

It would be naïve to divorce these economic threats from the political and anti-democratic tendencies elsewhere: blatant, overt racism made respectable, shamefully given the sanction of law by the highest legal authority in the land, expressed in the Law Lords' decision on the Preston Working Man's Club; the alarming expansion of National Front activities, and their sickening hypocrisy in attempting to conceal their racist poison behind populist political demands which deceive the unwary and which were put in front of electors in 90 constituencies in October 1974, compared with the sufficiently disquieting figure of 54 the previous February; and in particular the measures introduced by Jenkins, following the Birmingham bombing. But these have to be seen as part of the whole.

The use of the conspiracy laws against pickets opens up the way to the virtual outlawing of a method of work which is crucial to the successful prosecution of the workers' interests in an industrial dispute. The Shrewsbury pickets were unquestionably the victims of class law, straightforwardly admitted by the judge who said, in rejecting their appeal:

But the great difficulty is that, if it is true, and it may be, that the *deterrent effect* [emphasis added] of the original sentence has contributed to a period of relative peace, this court would be undoing the good work the sentences have done if we decide to set aside the sentences.

There can seldom have been a more cynical admission that a verdict and sentence have little to do with justice, but everything to do with class interest. This was a case where picketing was taking place in connection with a trade dispute. But now we also have the arrest of peaceful pickets outside an estate agents' in London, and a High Court decision that use of the highway for picketing 'not in furtherance of a trade dispute' was illegal.

The report of Lord Justice Scarman following the inquiry reviewing the events at Red Lion Square on June 15, 1974, has yet to be made public. The submission to that inquiry on behalf of the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police included proposals that are described in another submission as a 'quite frightening extension of police powers', and a 'horrifying incursion into the democratic rights of peaceful citizens'. The Police Commissioner was asking for seven days notice of a demonstration, which could in certain circumstances, and *provided the police agreed*, be reduced to 24 hours. He demanded also that any policeman should have the right to direct 'that any article which in his opinion is likely to provoke a breach of the

peace may not be carried or worn by any person taking part in the said procession or public meeting.' And further demanded that it should be an offence to 'disobey the directions of a constable when taking part in a public procession'—wording described in another submission to the inquiry as being 'the basic law of the police state.'

The 'Metropolitan Police General Orders', which apparently are the secret property of the Metropolitan Police and are not available to the general public, require the notification 'of all important meetings of communists, fascists and other similar political organisations', together with the names of 'principal speakers', to the Special Branch, and a special department of the police; the views of the Special Branch should, according to these orders, be sought by local authorities before letting a public hall to a particular organisation.

As was pointed out to Lord Justice Scarman, many trade unionists will be dismayed and shocked to learn that a duplicate report of anything in connection with trade disputes or political activities, which in the opinion of the police justifies a report to the Deputy Assistant Commissioner, should also be sent direct to the Special Branch. These sorts of measures can only mean that large numbers of trade union and political activists must be kept under constant surveillance by the Special Branch and other police agents.

It is not all that big a step to take from here, to the sort of situation which already exists in Northern Ireland, where it is public knowledge that not the police but military intelligence has a complete run-down on virtually every family. Is it not worth while recalling in this context the hue and cry when Heathrow Airport was surrounded by the 'ring of steel', in a massive display of force, allegedly because of the imminence of a rocket attack by some unnamed guerrillas? And then contrast the relative lack of concern displayed when Gatwick Airport was more recently the scene of a similar massive display of force, in what was on this occasion described as a routine exercise.

Some well-meaning observers poured scorn on the thought that the authorities were organising an elaborate plan to condition the public to an acceptance of soldiers and tanks being deployed on the streets. Can anyone now seriously doubt a relationship between what happened at Heathrow and Gatwick, Brigadier Kitson's thinking, Rippon's call, the attitude to picketing, contingency planning for a so-called army support role, and so on?

Marxists have always understood the relationship of the police and the military to the state machine, and their role in maintaining monopoly capitalism in existence. Speculation as to the possibility

of a military coup in Britain may seem to some to be unreal, but the immediate issue is not whether a military coup is likely: it is rather the growing stultification of democratic rights, and the terrible danger of this being accepted by the people now.

The total picture adds up to a truly formidable erosion of long-accepted democratic norms, and a dangerous escalation of authoritarian trends. There are many other areas requiring further exploration: the relationship between the universities and the military authorities, and the curtailment of academic freedom evident both in the treatment of university staffs and the attacks on students; the use of the mass media—an entire gigantic industry devoted to the manipulation of public opinion; the whittling away of the real power of parliament to take decisions, highlighted by Wilson's astonishing admission to the last parliament that a nuclear test that was the subject of questions in the House had already taken place; the increasing, deliberate, social isolation of the police and army from the ordinary people, alongside the denial to them of elementary democratic rights, including the right to join a *bona fide* trade union.

One of the most open and sharp expressions of this trend, exemplified in the abortive attempts of the Labour government to impose shackles on the trade union movement, and followed up by the Tory government's Industrial Relations Act, has been defeated. But that should not blind us to the dangers, either of future attempts to introduce legislation against the trade unions, or of equally serious attacks being carried out on other fronts, and not in the same public way.

Labour government or not, the growth of monopoly has proceeded at a tempestuous rate over the past years. There is, therefore, on the one hand ever more concentrated economic power, but on the other hand an ever diminishing area in which to exercise it. In such circumstances, all pretence of maintaining a democratic façade could well be ruthlessly cast aside. The liberal rhetoric so often favoured by the suave statesmen of Britain would be abandoned without a single qualm if monopoly capitalism felt itself really threatened—and if they thought they could contain the forces ranged against them. The current authoritarian trends, the severe erosion of democratic rights, the proven ruthlessness of the ruling class, all are questions of acute concern for the labour movement. This is why the unity of the left forces needs to be pursued with renewed vigour to mobilise the overwhelming majority of the people to exert pressure in the direction of socialism. The tendency to excessive authoritarianism under monopoly capitalism may be inevitable. Its victory is not.

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NATIONAL UNITY: REFORMS IN THE PHILIPPINES

William Pomeroy

ON October 11, 1974, in a much publicised ceremony, President Ferdinand Marcos met in friendship with leaders of the Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas (PKP), which had known underground conditions of repression for almost all of its 44 years of existence. Announced by both sides was a national unity agreement in which the PKP obtained the substance of legality. President Marcos pledged to give amnesty and ‘an active and productive role’ in his ‘New Society’ to all leaders and members of the PKP. In return, the PKP declared full support for reforms promulgated by Marcos. Said the PKP general secretary, Felicisimo Macapagal, in explaining his party’s decision to renounce armed struggle as part of the agreement:

We couldn’t help but realise that for the first time in the political history of our country genuine reforms are being carried out in a determined manner by no less than the President, reforms that are meant to advance the frontiers of social justice and open opportunities for a better life for our people. We did a lot of soul searching. We can’t be communists simply for the sake of communism. We are communists for the sake of our country and our people, and the first duty of a communist is patriotism.

It may seem paradoxical for a communist party that had led armed struggles for national liberation such as the Huk struggle against repressive neo-colonial regimes for over three decades to find grounds for unity with today’s Philippine government that has been widely portrayed as an anti-democratic dictatorship. This possibility has arisen, however, at a time when significant developments, new winds of change, have been occurring even in countries where neo-colonialism has been pronounced.

When martial law rule by decree was proclaimed by President Marcos in September 1972 it appeared to be with the blessings of US imperialism that had remained dominant in the Philippines after the 1946 independence. Under the Marcos ‘New Society’ virtually all normal democratic liberties have been suspended, and extremely liberal privileges have been offered to attract more foreign investment. Martial law reform decrees of President Marcos—for minimising corruption, rampant crime, tax evasion, waste and mismanagement—have been obviously intended to shape a more intensive and efficient Philippine capitalism in co-operation with foreign investment interests.

Among the Marcos reforms, however, have been others of wider ramification that distinguish the Philippine regime from others in the world of right-wing authoritarian character. They have included land reform, an extensive setting-up of peasant co-operatives, establishment of relations with socialist countries for the first time, a diversification of trade and investment that has diluted US dominance, a new Labour code with progressive features, expanded workers' benefits, and a new constitution that replaces the old corrupt US-implanted presidential system with a parliamentary system better suited to Philippine needs (to take effect after martial law has terminated).

President Marcos has gone further. He has taken over one of the major US oil companies, Esso, and converted it into a government oil company that forms a foothold of nationalisation. He has permitted the 28 year old neo-colonial trade agreement with the US to expire (on July 3, 1974) along with its notorious 'parity' provision that gave US corporations privileged equal rights with Filipinos, and has resisted pressure of US interests to extend the privileges. He has attempted to curtail the political role of the powerful, reactionary Catholic Church.

Diplomatic relations have been established with all European socialist countries (except Albania), and, pending pledged simultaneous formal relations with the Soviet Union and China, significant trade arrangements have been reached with both of these countries. Recent steps have included the setting up of a Philippine-Soviet shipping company to which Soviet shipping lines have made vessels available with cargo rates 15 per cent lower than those of Western lines that have been increasing rates steeply, and an agreement with China for the supply of 60,000 tons of Chinese oil annually (to be refined in the former Esso refinery now government run).

Other newly independent features of a foreign policy once closely tied to that of the US have been support of the Arab countries' demand for Israeli withdrawal from occupied territories and support of anti-apartheid moves to exclude South Africa from UN committees.

The PKP has declared full support for a number of Marcos reforms that it sees as basic steps toward social progress and genuine independence. Chief among these are the land reform programme that proposes to emancipate nearly 1,500,000 peasants from semi-feudal tenancy conditions (a breaking up and distribution of all landholdings in rice and corn production of over seven hectares in size has been proclaimed), and the policy of relations with socialist

countries which the PKP sees as a counterpoise to the foreign investment policy.

Another measure supported by the PKP is a provision in the new Labour Code that establishes industrial trade unions on a one industry, one federation basis, an important step that overcomes the prevalence of small, rival, often-racketeering unions and federations that had disunited the Filipino labour movement.

A co-operation agreement between the Marcos government and the PKP has not been a sudden development. Problems intended to be solved by martial law measures have continued to accumulate for Marcos. Although these measures have stimulated production and exports, enabling an unprecedented favourable trade balance since 1972, the benefits have not reached the average Filipino, and a 40 per cent rate of inflation in the past year, augmented by world factors, has hit at already low living standards. Long-standing, colonial-induced problems of mass poverty, gross social inequalities and unemployment have been undented.

Sporadic rebellion has been fostered from several quarters: a Moslem separatist movement in the southernmost islands that is the fruit of centuries of neglect of that minority, a Maoist 'New People's Army' that got underway when guerrilla warfare was being fostered from Peking as a general line in south-east Asia, and subversion from repressed right-wing political rivals of Marcos and from Catholic Church elements. A not unusual alliance of the ultra-left and the right has tended to form. In addition a threat has been openly discussed in the US press of an army take-over in case Marcos cannot maintain 'stability', i.e. if he moves too far out of line with what US interests desire from him. It is a moot question as to how much loyalty Marcos can command from an army trained, equipped and directed for decades by US military advisory teams. President Marcos has need of all the popular support he can obtain.

The PKP, for its part, had been developing a fight for legality prior to martial law, to overcome the limitations of underground life and the costly armed struggle conditions of 32 years' duration. Class realities and the pressure of circumstances, not the question of who is in power, have been seen as determining the achievement of legality. The new anti-imperialist stage emerging in 'third world' struggles for national control of resources and the international trend toward detente are viewed as favourable factors affecting the Philippines. When martial law occurred, decrees suspending democratic rights were sharply opposed by the PKP (which continues to call for a lifting of martial law despite the national unity agreement),

but an adoption of all-out armed struggle as undertaken by the adventurist Maoists was rejected, the options being left open on the course the 'New Society' might take.

A PKP Sixth Conference was held underground in February 1973. One of its decisions was to press for 'the recognition of the right of the PKP and other parties demanding revolutionary changes to work openly and legally among the Filipino masses.' The issue was projected in this way:

One of the major obstacles to the spread of Party influence among the masses is its underground status. This situation did not arise out of its own deliberate choice. It was driven underground as a result of state repression, intending to check and thwart any effective work of the Party in organising and leading the working masses into a force for independence, democracy and economic liberation. This alone clarifies the point that the fight for legalisation of the Party meets the main tactic of the enemy.

The Party exists only as an advanced unit of the working people. It is inseparable from the Filipino working people, and its objectives are indistinguishable from the interests of the working people. The fight for legalisation therefore embodies the most basic right of the working masses to full consciousness of its present exploited and oppressed condition. It expresses the highest demand of the people to be free from imperialist domination, to shed their feudal bondage, and to build a new life of social liberation. The declared policy to struggle for the right of the Party to work legally and openly among the masses is not merely a tactical manoeuvre but a firm principled position.

It needs to be understood that the placing of the question in this way arose from the necessity to overcome the rigidity of attitudes existing both in a movement conditioned by decades of armed struggle and in ruling groups that imperialism had brainwashed into viewing communists only in such a light.

A tacit acceptance by the Marcos government of the PKP position on legality is one of the key features of the Philippine national unity agreement. Underlying it is apparently an awareness by President Marcos that more than decrees are needed to carry out reforms, that active organised popular support is essential. Thus in Presidential Decree No 571 issued on November 3, fulfilling the amnesty pledge to the PKP, all PKP-led mass organisations, banned at the inauguration of martial law, are also included, such as the largest Philippine peasant union, Malayang Samahan ng Magsasaka, and the big youth movement, Malayang Pagkakaisa ng Kabataang Pilipino.

The first area in which the national unity agreement has come into effect is land reform, the progress of which has been held up by such factors as opposition and sabotage by landlords, especially

middle landlords, who had succeeded in halting reform at the 50 hectare level. On November 16 an enormous mass meeting of 150,000 people was held in the town of Aliaga, Nueva Ecija, in the heart of the PKP mass base region of Central Luzon. PKP organisational capacity was displayed here, as well as popular response to the PKP's national unity position. The meeting was addressed by both President Marcos and the PKP's general secretary, Felicisimo Macapagal, and by the head of the old PKP military department, Alejandro Briones. At this meeting Marcos announced instructions for land reform to be extended to land holdings of seven hectares and over. This association of land reform with PKP support is an unprecedented political step in the Philippines and an indication of the profound significance of the PKP-Marcos agreement.

LABOUR MONTHLY

FIFTY YEARS AGO

MacDonald, whatever his faults, is a first class actor. The handsome presence, the deep eyes, the splendid voice, the dignity of the man caught the senses and anaesthetised the judgement. Only those who obstinately remembered, not the martyr-in-spite-of-himself of the war years, but the petty intriguer of the years before the war, shook their heads and predicted trouble to unwilling listeners.

For this egoist was to prove at bottom as weak and unstable a man as that one of whom Mrs Elphinstone said: 'He has a leg.' 'He had a leg' will serve for MacDonald's epitaph. His inevitable Abbey statue will, one trusts, show him in court dress.

Rarely indeed in history was a statesman so disproportioned to his task. It called for the highest and toughest qualities. And this was a weak, irresolute man: a man with a vague mind incapable alike of hard thinking and of clear thinking; a man with no grasp of principles, no equipment of knowledge; a man susceptible to flattery and intolerant of criticism; at once domineering and sycophantic; a man of an amazing vanity and a boundless conceit; an actor who was his own perpetual and admiring audience.

This MacDonald, by irony of Fate and the stupidity of the Labour Party, was sent to a great task. Perhaps it is to his credit that he did not attempt it. This Saint George, having no stomach for fighting, did not attack his dragon. He courteously shook hands with it and explained that so far from being a dragon killer he felt that he and the dragon could get along splendidly and co-operate in perfect loyalty. In fact he was a bit of a dragon himself. And having exchanged his armour for a dragon make-up, from the nearest costumiers, he proceeded for his nine short months to strut about as a dragon. Very creditably he did it too. For, be it said again, he is an admirable actor. And—he has a leg.

(From 'The Diplomacy of Mr Ramsay MacDonald' by 'U.D.C.', *Labour Monthly*, January 1925)

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New Society

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NEW YEAR GREETINGS

*from the Editor and
staff of*

SOVIET WEEKLY

CORRESPONDENCE

Nationalism

WHAT ALEX MURRAY says in his article on 'Nationalism' (*LM*, December 1974) is only too true, but he limits his remarks mainly to Scotland. The statement published by the Communist Party of Great Britain on October 16, 1967, stated: 'Questions of cultural rights and economic demands are being raised in various forms in such areas as Cornwall, in the Isle of Man, and the Channel Islands. Future developments in Britain must clearly be aimed to satisfy real aspirations which will add to the future and richness of our national life.' As a young relative of mine put it: 'The trouble is that there are so few of us'—the chief difference which I can see between Cornwall and Scotland is that the former has a population of 400,000 and Scotland some 5,000,000.

In 1967 the nationalist party Mebyon Kernow ('Sons of Cornwall') was treated as a joke, just as the Scottish National Party had been some years previously, but today the statements of their leaders are quoted solemnly in the most reactionary papers. They have established an official liaison with the SNP, and although their candidate in this constituency polled only 384 votes at the last election this is not a real guide to their influence, since many who shared their sentiments probably voted for the Liberal who was elected.

Their leader, Dr James Whetter, is not a political simpleton. In 1972 when the dockers at Par, Fowey and Charlestown to the number of 108 struck in support of the 'Pentonville Five', the Mebyon Kernow appealed to them to go back to work, on the ground that they were jeopardising the export of china clay. The china clay employers organised a demonstration of 6,000 workers against the strike,

led by the then Tory MP and officially supported by the Mebyon Kernow. The English China Clay Company is a multinational corporation which dominates this area both economically and ideologically.

The Mebyon Kernow claim to champion the 'small man', but their organ, the *Cornish Nation*, has recently published a correspondence between Dr Whetter, their parliamentary candidate, and the development manager of the production development of English Clays Lovering Pochin & Company Limited. In a letter of June 30, 1974, Dr Whetter writes: 'There is no doubt that people in this area could be far worse off if the clay exploiting company were a distantly-based international concern rather than a responsible locally-based one. Also if it were a London-based nationalised concern. However, it must be appreciated that, responsible to the interests of local people as the company is, in the present set-up the ultimate object of the company is to provide a return on shareholders' investments: they are its *raison d'être*.' ALFRED JENKIN

St Austell, Cornwall

To the Trade Unions with Confidence

BORN IN South Wales and having worked in the pits, Tynnewydd, Abertyswg and Taff Merthyr, receiving my baptism in the crucible of the class struggle before coming to Canada when a young lad, I find *Labour Monthly* keeps me right on the bit with the flow of events over there. The 1923 and 1926 strike struggles, as well as the earlier dated struggles of the miners, the troops and curfews at Rhymney and surrounding areas, helped to provide elucidation as to the class system of robbery that I was a victim of along with my fellow workers. The treacherous sell-outs of MacDonald and Jimmy Thomas (Black Friday) are well remembered with

disgust and hatred. Also some of the emotional windbags of the Independent Labour Party. The leaders that attracted my attention and appeal were of the Tom Mann, Pollitt, S. O. Davies and Bryn Roberts type.

Alan Brown's article, 'To the TUC with Confidence' (*LM*, September 1974) is logical and inspiring. There is undoubtedly no other form of organisation that is capable of such broad, all-embracing appeal as the trade union movement to lead the people of Britain out of the mess and misery that Mr Heath and his supporters have created over the many, many decades of capitalist exploitation and schemings.

The months directly ahead will be revealing and challenging for all toilers in all the capitalist countries. The US and its bourgeois ulcers are coming to the surface with a vengeance with Watergate. The upsurge of American indignity to this arrogant

and blatant attempt by Ford to further cover up the Watergate cover up is yet to come. Ford's attempt to try and divert attention into other channels—oil crisis, inflation, crop failures, school integration, aid to needy countries—will not take Yankee capital off the crisis hook. Synonymous with the much vaunted British lion the Yankee eagle has lost a lot of flight feathers.

Likewise in Canada, we are entangled in this malaise: higher prices for commodities in spite of surpluses, sugar, meat, vegetables, mingled with a bad odour of rotten eggs. Unemployment, increased welfare recipients, crime and deceit by the boss class and their politicians. There is a way out of this for all of us little people who bear the worse brunt, the road to socialism; and trade unions will have a major role.

JOHN OGBOURNE
Canada

SOCIETY OF GRAPHICAL AND ALLIED TRADES

The National Executive Council of SOGAT extends to all friends its sincere wishes for a successful 1975, and a continued advance towards a democratic socialist society.

W. H. KEYS
General Secretary

BOOKS

The Revolutions of 1848

Peter N. Stearns

Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 278 pp, £3.95

SO MANY AND SO VARIED are the contending forces which contrived in the fateful year 1848 to trigger off a series of revolutionary outbreaks in Paris, Baden and other cities of south Germany, in Vienna, Prague, Budapest, and in Milan, Palermo and other cities of the Italian peninsula, that we are grateful for a book which presents this year in its historical setting. It isolates for study the contending groups, indicates the complex development of the conflicts, and gives valid reasons for the dying out of the conflagration, after some bloody encounters, without apparent aftermath.

It sets the scene in France following the bourgeois revolution of 1830, it shows the spark at work in the greater part of western, central and Mediterranean Europe, in the still disunited Germany and Italy and in the unwieldy but still powerful Hapsburg Empire. It discusses and assesses the ideological forces at work, liberalism, radicalism, socialism, nationalism; and it assigns to these ideological forces the classes for whom they were rallying battle cries: the middle class of small bourgeois businessmen, professionals and students, the artisans harking back to earlier social forms like the guilds, or tentatively being attracted to socialism in its utopian garb, for the most part, but peripherally to Marxism, the still sparse, still immature factory workers, and finally the peasants, the largest potential force, though the one least drawn into the struggles.

Within the Hapsburg Empire, the revolutionaries were the Hungarians, the Czech and Slav nationalists, as

well as the middle class forces aiming at national independence in the fragmented kingdoms of Italy. For the Germans, the revolution begins as an attempt to force city and petty monarchs and despots to grant franchises and free diets.

The deep misery of the urban masses, facing unemployment and actual starvation, and that of the rural poor, hardly better off, provide the ever present groundswell of revolt. But the leadership of this revolt is everywhere shown to be in the hands of liberals, almost as much afraid of the forces they were leading, as they were of the feudalists against whom they were pitted. Yet not all was annihilation, bloodshed and defeat. Bloodshed there was in plenty, in Paris, in northern Italy, in Prague, Vienna, Budapest. The major aims of the revolution had to wait for 20 years or more to flower in German and Italian unification, and in the great proletarian experience of the Commune. But there were some gains that were immediate, and this book details them.

The chief value of this book lies in the very careful appraisal of the classes in action, and in the delineation of the strengths and weaknesses of



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General Secretary: Alan Sapper

these forces. Of them all, liberalism, the movement of the urban bourgeoisie and professionals, was the most pervasive, and its weaknesses guaranteed the failure of the revolutions.

Scholars will welcome this book for its aids to further study, for the detailed bibliographies. Readers of *Labour Monthly* will be glad to have a compendious, reasoned, intelligible account of the struggles, and an assessment of the forces at work, and will welcome the always respectful references to Marx and Marxism, and especially to the *Class Struggles in France*, the *Eighteenth Brumaire* and the *Civil War in France*.

BEN AINLEY

Dictionary of Labour Biography, Vol 2
 Edited by Joyce Bellamy and John Saville

Macmillan, 476 pp, £20

THIS NOTABLE reference work, in its first two volumes, already contains about 370 life stories, with extensive source lists. Among them (selecting a few) are nineteenth-century pioneers like William Allan, Robert Applegarth, Samuel Bamford, Joseph Cowan, Frederick Harrison, Henry Hetherington, G. J. Holyoake and George Howell, with the first two worker-MPs Thomas Burt and Alexander Macdonald. There are trade unionists of a later age like William Brace, Vernon Hartshorn, Mary Macarthur, James O'Grady, A. A. Purcell and Herbert Smith; men and women prominent in Labour Party history like Margaret Bondfield, H. N. Brailsford, Arthur Henderson, George Lansbury, E. R. Pease, Beatrice and Sydney Webb; and others, radical reformers or militant socialists (one communist) like Clive Branson, Edward Carpenter, J. A. Hobson, Fred Longden and Conrad Noel. As in the first volume, the editors print all the biographies available to them at the

moment, from A to Z. This was certainly the best way to proceed, given the scarcity of biographical material available in the labour movement. An occasional flavour of intra-communism was to be expected, but is not too prominent. At the price, the volume is suitable only for libraries: but every reader should make sure of a copy there.

ANDREW ROTHSTEIN

**The Union of Post Office Workers:
 A Study in Political Sociology**
 Michael Moran

Macmillan, 184 pp, £5.95

DOUBTLESS I have been asked to review this book because of my record of work as an active trade unionist for the past 32 years, the last 25 of which have been spent at all levels in the ranks of the Union of Post Office Workers, including my current responsibility as the full time Occupational Officer for Postmen.

Chapter eleven purports to draw together the threads of the study. Page 140 carries this revealing admission by Mick Moran: 'This work is a study of the Union of Post Office Workers because I lacked time, money and energy to carry out a comparative investigation of a number of unions.' It came, therefore, as no surprise that later, on the same page, he quotes with apparent approval a view which runs: 'Case studies never "prove" anything'—confirming that which had not escaped this reader, that the implications of this study were 'roughly' to direct attention to some generalisations. Can I observe that many years ago I was enjoined by a respected veteran shop steward in the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers always to get matters into perspective. He suggested that this could be best achieved by asking two questions: In whose interests? For whose benefit? ...

MAURICE STYLES

**THE AMALGAMATED
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BOILERMAKERS,
SHIPWRIGHTS,
BLACKSMITHS AND
STRUCTURAL
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The Executive Council on behalf of its members sends Christmas and New Year greetings and a wish that 1975 will see peace in Northern Ireland.

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and
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A. Scargill, President

J. T. Leigh, Vice-President

R. Horbury, Financial Secretary

O. Briscoe, General Secretary

BRAM FISCHER

THE struggle for liberation in South Africa wins support—though not necessarily in those plain terms—from perhaps the broadest range of organisations and people in Britain who at any time take action over any international issue.

When Fred Carneson handed us the manuscript of his article about the SATIS campaign for the release of political prisoners in southern Africa for our May 1974 *LM*, he told us exactly how much of his sentence of five years and nine months had been served in Pretoria Local Prison. His simple statement conveyed something of the nature of that establishment without going into details, but it was not until very recently when reading James Kantor's book, *A Healthy Grave* (Seven Seas, 304 pp, 40p), that its special grimness was explained.

Kantor's case was dismissed after one year of detention, spent partly in Pretoria Local. His book—which is good and easy to read—amazed me by showing how much one could learn, after all this time, about the Rivonia Trial as he described it, and the prison conditions he knew.

Bram Fischer has known Pretoria Local. We saw the notice on December 12 in the *Morning Star* that his illness was passing into its final stage, after nine years served of a life sentence. What a condemnation of Vorster's apartheid regime that its prisons should kill such a fighter. Even Ian Smith's detainees are being freed under the combined pressure of the many forces brought to bear in neighbouring Zimbabwe. If that can be achieved, then we can and must force the hands of South Africa's Vorster. We have not done enough yet for our South African brothers.

LM's service here can be seen as only one of many small and large efforts which together must win in the end. Our fund supporters know it and will surely rally to increase our total. We must make up for the lower amount collected in November:

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